

ABROAD

BRASILIA

Back to Fidel

Brazil has re-established diplomatic and commercial relations with Fidel Castro after a break of 22 years, signifying to many observers here the end of Cuba's isolation in Latin America. Now only two governments, Chile's and Paraguay's, maintain the Latin American diplomatic blockade that was begun in the early 1960s, following the lead of the United States. While there was no formal reaction from the State Department, one high official characterized the démarche as "lamentable."

ANKARA

Thirteenth

A major issue taking form here, and soon to cast its shadow across Western Europe, is when and how—no longer really if—Turkey becomes the 13th member of the Common Market. Turkey has a long association with modern European structures. It has been a member of the Council of Europe since 1949, and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization since 1952. There is no dispute about its position as a strategic pillar of NATO. An agreement in 1963 (reconfirmed in 1977) created an economic association between the EEC and Turkey that is now considered a step toward EEC membership. And in 1976 a protocol was signed in Brussels authorizing free circulation of Turkish workers among member countries by the end of this year. This affects hundreds of thousands of Turkish workers in Western Europe, particularly in West Germany, which has insisted on applying national immigration controls to them. Moreover, in the last three years Prime Minister Turgut Ozal has freed exchange, abolished currency and price controls, and pursued a policy of righting trade and debt balances that has won approval of the OECD and the IMF. Today Turkey can handle its foreign debts and raise capital on the international market. But while Turkey may look toward Europe, it looks toward Asia too. Though the Turkish state is secular, its constitution makes important reference to Islam, to which 90 per cent of its population adheres. Until the collapse of oil prices, the government had been considering the idea of promoting an Islamic common market. Then there is the demographic problem. Turkey's birth rate far outstrips those of West Germany and France, for example. There are 52 million Turks today, most of them young. By the end of the century there will be one hundred million. Such a bloc cannot be easily integrated into Europe, politically or culturally.

BUDAPEST

Western and More Western

Hungary has become known as the Soviet-bloc country with a Western-style economy. It now does 50 per cent of its international business with the West. Its currency rates on the official market and the black market are practically the same. It has cut inflation to 5 per cent, and its sociologists are beginning to talk about "the poverty line," hitherto an unknown subject of concern in a Communist country. Tourists to Budapest know all about its glittering shopping malls filled with French perfume, Scotch whisky,

Japanese cameras, and other luxury goods, so unlike the run-down retail outlets of Warsaw and Moscow. The food shops are laden with exotic products, and the streets are full of expensive foreign cars. Hungarians will soon be able to see Western television via satellite. A London-based entertainment network has concluded an agreement with Hungarian state television, and in a few months hotels in Budapest and other cities will receive the programs (no news or news features, however). Later, ordinary Hungarians are expected to be able to view the programs over community aerial systems. Until now, programs carried by Western satellites have been banned throughout the Eastern bloc.

LONDON

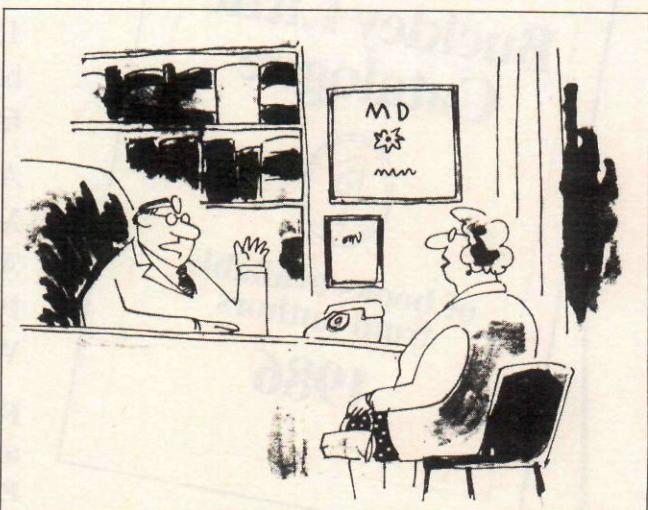
Family Persons

The London branch of the Labour Party wants to ban family photographs from its candidates' campaign literature because they are "unfair to homosexuals and lesbians." Its aim is to "eliminate heterosexism." Gay activists took offense at a recent successful election campaign conducted by Nick Raynsford in a Fulham by-election. Raynsford's campaign material carried several photographs of him with his wife and children. A spokesperson said that if a candidate did not emphasize his or her personal life, there would be no necessity for gays and lesbians to display their sexual preferences. The national Labour Party said that the London executive's stand was not binding, and that the example would not be followed by the national party leadership. Raynsford commented that using family photographs in his campaign "was the most natural thing in the world."

CHESTER

Top Teddy

An 82-year-old teddy bear was sold here at auction the other day for £4,800 (\$7,200) to a German collector. The toy, thirty inches tall, was put away in a cupboard almost immediately after it was given to a five-year-old Liverpool boy in 1904 and not touched since. The bear's paw bore the original price tag—18 shillings, 9 pence, less than a pound in the money of the day. The previous high price paid for a teddy was £1,500 (\$2,250).



"Whoa! Slow down, Mrs. Marney. Please keep in mind I have to translate all your laymen's terms into medical gobbledegook."

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